

## Christmas greetings from Peru



*Jesy works with our partner CEAS, closely accompanying the people of Cruz de Mayo as they build their skills to negotiate as equals in decisions concerning the use of the water and land in their area.*

Christmas is a time for meeting up, and for reflection. We remember the birth of Jesus, and the legacy he left us in the work that he did on Earth during that time. At home, we spend Christmas with family. It's a time to share, to spend time with family and appreciate what we have as a family.

We share a turkey, or sometimes other types of food that are more traditional in Peru. Then there's chocolate, and sweet breads, which are very popular.

However, above all, we believe it's a time to be together, a time for reunion with the family. We send our wishes to England and Wales for this coming Christmas. We hope that you too remember the birth of Jesus, and, most importantly, the work that he did, so that we can continue to fight for those who are less fortunate this Christmas.

This year many of us tried to bring the Year of Mercy into everything we did, and we tried to remember the solidarity we should have with our brothers and sisters who do not have so much, and with those who will be suffering various difficulties this Christmas.

The Year of Mercy has allowed us to reflect a lot on the inequalities that exist in our country, and at a global level, and the clear messages given to us by Pope Francis. He reminds us that we need to learn to forgive, but also that we need to show solidarity with others, in order to create a much more humane world.

## Christmas greetings from Peru

*Luz works to help children in San Benito, Lima, helping them to have safe places to play, grow and learn, with our partner Warmi Huasi*



For me, Christmas isn't about presents. It must be about unity and solidarity, above all else. On Christmas day, in my family my husband, and my children bring me food, chocolate and milk to make hot chocolate, so that I can go and distribute this to families who don't have much. Because that's what Christmas is about — sharing. And, it's this symbol of being in solidarity with someone who doesn't have much.

## Christmas greetings from Peru



*Adán lives in the Cruz de Mayo community in Ancash, Peru, where partner CEAS are working to support the community members in the management of water resources locally.*

For us, Christmas signifies a day of peace, of love and unity, because it's a day when we get together with family... to eat what we have. Well, not exactly all of us, but those who are able to, because sometimes we have family members who are far away and so not everyone is able to get together. But, it's a very special day for each family in the community.

We are all there, almost nobody works. Instead there are games, sharing and some times people tell stories. We also make use of this time to ask questions or seek advice from older people. It's a beautiful day. We go down to the rivers, where there is shade, and trees, and that's where we spend the day. Christmas makes everyone happy, excited, and almost always brings people together.

In the evening we share hot chocolate and panettone, which you can get from the shops. Some families add cow's milk, which you can get here in the community, and each family prepares it however they like it best. Some people like to add some herbs, like lemon verbena, and that makes the chocolate tastier. Some people prepare dishes that are more commonly prepared in the community on special days like 'el picante de cuy' [a spicy dish made from guinea pig], or sometimes 'yucca de gallina' soup. It's a very special day, which has a lot of meaning for the community.

I hope you have a great day —that you are happy, together with family. We hope you always remember us living in Peru, where there are many problems because of water and other issues too.

## Christmas greetings from Peru

*Milka is the Coordinator of Warmi Huasi, our partner working in San Benito, Lima, to help children to have somewhere safe to play, learn and grow.*



Christmas here in Peru falls in summertime, so the heat of summer combines with the human warmth in the people. Families come together. Drinking hot chocolate together is very popular, accompanied by pannetone. It's a chance for children to come together too. In school and other places they prepare chocolate for the children to share in the days before Christmas.

Christmas is a time of sharing, being with others, laughing, and enjoying being in the company of others.

For me, Christmas is a really special time to be with family, to enjoy being with my son and my nephews and nieces, my parents, my husband's family. Christmas is the best opportunity for coming together, and for reflecting. We are in a time when we are bombarded with presents, material gifts. Here in San Benito we can truly appreciate the real meaning of Christmas, which is to share our own lives with others. It doesn't matter if there aren't presents. It doesn't matter if we don't have a turkey for dinner. The important thing is to be with others. Since I have been working here in San Benito, Christmas has taken on a new meaning for me and my family. The material things are not the priority. The important thing is enjoyment.

Thank you for listening to us, for taking an interest in our work. We really like sharing it with you, and telling you about what the children are achieving with the support of CAFOD. These are children who are turning their dreams into reality. They dream of having a park, and they are doing everything in their power to bring this about. The adults in the community are helping them. Thank you for being interested in this and we will keep you updated.